United Nations ST/IC/1999/104

# Secretariat

8 December 1999

## Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Management

Subject: **Special arrangements at Headquarters in view of potential year 2000 (Y2K)-induced computer date conversion failures during the century roll-over period**

1. Further to previous information circulars[1] on potential problems associated with the year 2000 (Y2K) date conversion problem of computers, the so-called "millennium bug", the present circular is to inform staff that special contingency arrangements are being put in place at Headquarters during the century roll-over period. A Y2K management structure has been established to monitor developments, determine whether the failure of critical indicators and measurements require immediate/rapid action and/or measures to restore the Organization's overall status and ensure the safety of its staff. Starting on Friday, 31 December 1999, after 1 p.m., the only activities scheduled to occur at Headquarters will relate to the century roll-over. Therefore, in order to ensure that this work proceeds smoothly, it will be necessary to restrict access to the Headquarters premises. The last guided tour on 31 December 1999 will take place at 12 noon. Guided tours will resume when the building opens to the public on 4 January 2000. Representatives of non-governmental organizations, retirees, guests, visitors and the general public will not be permitted access during the closure of Headquarters.

**Restrictions on access and limited operations at Headquarters**

2. All staff members should confirm their work status with their supervisors. Unless otherwise directed, they will be released from official duty not later than 1 p.m. on Friday, 31 December 1999, until the resumption of the regular work schedule on Tuesday, 4 January 2000. Except as indicated in paragraph 3 below, during the closure of the building, staff members will not be granted access to or be allowed to remain on the premises of the Secretariat building. The DC-1, DC-2, FF and 345 Park Avenue South buildings will provide access to United Nations staff on 31 December until closing and will have staff to maintain essential buildings operations thereafter; any critical United Nations equipment and services

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 4 January 2000.

[1] ST/IC/1999/34 and ST/IC/1999/80.

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will need to be monitored by the United Nations. The duration of the Y2K transition will be reviewed by the Y2K management team, which will determine whether it will be necessary to shorten or extend the closure.

3. The Headquarters premises will remain open to United Nations staff and other authorized individuals required for essential maintenance or security functions as well as those carrying out critical functions in support of contingency plans. Those staff members and authorized individuals have been advised by their supervisors. The names of those staff and other individuals authorized to access the premises will be included in a special register used by security officers to allow entry. Such individuals will be required to present their grounds passes as usual. *All other United Nations staff members will not be permitted access or allowed to remain on the premises during the closure of Headquarters.*

4. Departments are urged to restrict to the absolute minimum requests for access for their staff needed to support critical functions. Such requests should be consistent with the estimated minimum number of staff required to support contingency plans submitted earlier to the Y2K team. The executive offices of each department requiring access for their authorized staff should address individual written requests to the Pass and Identification Unit, Security and Safety Service, fax number 3-9541, by 17 December 1999.

**Restricted garage access during the period 31 December 1999 through 3 January 2000**

5. The established practice of allowing staff members to park in the United Nations garage after 6 p.m. on weekdays and throughout the day on weekends and holidays, upon presentation of their grounds pass, will be suspended at 8 p.m. on Friday, 31 December 1999, until 8 p.m. on Monday, 3 January 2000. Entry to the garage during that period will be limited to authorized delegation vehicles and to staff who are identified on the special security register mentioned in paragraph 3 above. Other staff members normally authorized to use the garage on a daily basis must either remove their vehicles by 8 p.m. on Friday 31 December 1999 or leave their cars parked until 4 January 2000 as they will not be allowed access to the building during the closure.

**Computers and networks**

6. In order to prepare for the century roll-over, the Information Technology Services Division will be performing full backups of all LAN servers on Thursday, 30 December, beginning at 6 p.m. Although users will be able to work after 6 p.m. on that evening, access to the LAN will be extremely slow owing to the backup operations. Most backups will finish before 8 a.m. on 31 December 1999. However, a few server backups may continue to run until 11 a.m. Should a server backup fail, the Information Technology Services Division will need to take the server off the LAN and perform a manual backup on the morning of 31 December 1999. In the event of this happening, the affected users will be notified accordingly

7. During the roll-over period, and in particular during the night of 31 December 1999, the Information Technology Services Division will provide special LAN, e-mail, messaging and telephone support with on-site and on-call staff. On-site tests of the entire LAN and communications infrastructure will be performed throughout the weekend to ensure proper functioning prior to the start of the business day on Tuesday, 4 January 2000.

8. Although the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) has been extensively tested to ensure its Y2K compliance, it will be unavailable as of 2 p.m. on 31 December 1999 until 8 a.m. on 4 January 2000, or earlier, subject to satisfactory completion of the

infrastructure and application tests that will be undertaken starting on the morning of 1 January 2000. As part of the contingency plans, it is recommended that all executive and administrative officers run, between 29 and 31 December 1999, the main IMIS reports summarizing their personnel and financial data and download and save the data locally on their c: drives. Contingency plans will be communicated to the executive and administrative offices in due time to ensure that, should IMIS not be available on 4 January 2000, for any reason, continuity of operations can be maintained.

9. *All users are requested to turn off their personal computers, printers and other electronic devices before they leave the building on 31 December 1999.* For additional protection, they may also wish to unplug them.

**Obtaining further information**

10. Upon completion of the verification of the functioning of all building equipment and information technology infrastructure, equipment and critical applications, the Y2K crisis management team may decide to reopen the building before 8 a.m. on 4 January 2000. Interested staff members and staff of permanent missions and affiliates may, as at 2 January 2000, call the following number, where a recorded message will provide updated information: (212) 963-9800.